

What's in Your Creek?

Ken Yorde, Rocklin Councilmember

Creek Week

April 5 – 13

Would you want to take a swim in a storm drain? Okay, maybe not. Granted it might be a little cramped for doing the backstroke. But, would you consider the water in the drain by your house clean enough to swim in? It should be. And, that's what Creek Week is all about.

This event is more than just learning about the watersheds in our community and cleaning up a bit of litter. It is important that our entire community understands that what goes into the storm drain doesn't go to a treatment plant. It goes into our waterways, down to the Sacramento River, under the Golden Gate Bridge, into the Pacific Ocean. Whatever goes into those drains impacts our environment.

Creek Week is a regional program through the Dry Creek Conservancy that is designed to educate the public and promote the protection of local creeks and watersheds. As part of this year's event, the City of Rocklin is hosting a Tree Planting at Breen Park on April 5th. We have approximately 100 trees to plant that will not only improve the aesthetics of the park but will also protect the creeks and waterways from harmful top soil runoff. This is the first year of official involvement and the beginning of an annual event.

Why should you get involved? Well, let me offer a few points of inspiration – 100 to be exact.

Rock Creek and Sierra Elementary Schools have almost 100 students who have volunteered their time as a class project to grow the seedlings for this planting. The children's enthusiasm and excitement for this project has been tremendous. Under the direction of their teachers, Chris Anderson and Wayne Dickey, these students meticulously collected acorns indigenous to the area. Each student then took their acorns to class and has since carefully nurtured the acorns into seedlings ready to be planted in Breen Park.

As each child carefully plants their very own tree in the park on Saturday the tree will be tagged with their name, making it a permanent part of the landscape. Not only will they be able to watch their tree grow as they themselves grow up in Rocklin, but they are simultaneously learning the value of contributing to their community.

Students are not the only ones getting involved. This is definitely a concerted effort. Businesses have contributed time and materials. Resident volunteers have worked diligently to organize the details. Additionally, the City of Rocklin is proactively supporting these "green" activities.

Specifically, the green toter program, which has been in place in the City for over a year, is being put to good use. The mulch and compost used for the Breen Park plantings comes from the recycled material residents have been putting in their green toters each week. Additionally, the City is providing the drip irrigation to promote the healthy growth of the more than 100 trees in the park.

As a community, we have a wonderful opportunity to make a difference during the coming week through a host of activities including restoration projects and educational outings. Working with the Dry Creek Conservancy as well as local schools, businesses, residents and city staff we can take action that will have a lasting impact on protecting our watershed and our environment. Remember the creeks and open space belong to the entire city and it's up to us to protect them.

For more information on ways you can get involved in the Breen Park Tree Planting call Nancy Hartwell with the City of Rocklin at 625-5052. Also, for a list of sites and meeting places for the week's events contact Dry Creek Conservancy at 773-6575 or email them at dcc@unlimited.net.